Sublime
issue

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Breathe

By Scott Lee

I put her electric essence
in wooden frame
but she broke free
like Pinocchio's sister
riding Black Stallion
galloping across Milky Way

connected broken light
back into meters & rhymes

I tattooed her crest
into my bones
her waves wiped shorelines
clean of footprints

I poured her cream into my coffee
long distance numbers shrunk
quantum physics into one pebble

I closed the gap through forest trees
in our dreams we broke every law
tyranny set up against us

endless possibilities
still cling to me
like an alien hand
breaching restricted air space

don't tell us we're not allowed to breathe.

On the National Regi
Loyalty
surrounding community. Choose from rooms with
private bathrooms down the hall shared
the colorful cast of
McMinnville
Lodging

Our Poem

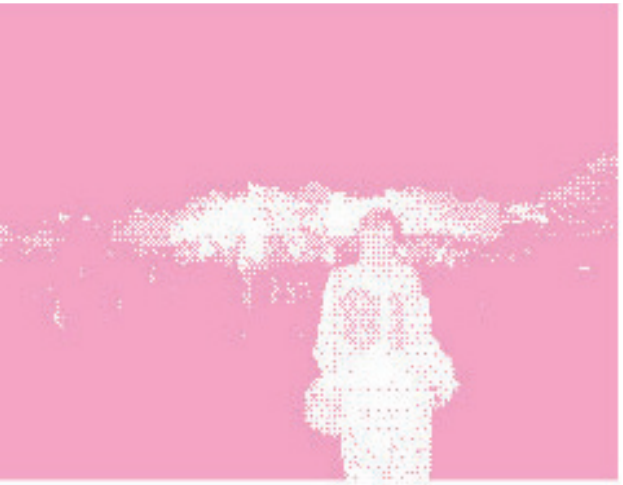
By Costas Kowalski and Daphne Patrick

I want to build something together
Take parts of you and make them parts of me
I want to get two drinks to share
I want to write this poem, back and forth,
stanza by stanza

Water sprays and floods onto
the floor of the ship
I'd normally rush to find the anchor
Any earthly guarantee that I'd be okay
Instead it's your gentle gaze
ceasing the saltwater tosses

Our life together is a sailor's song
I love the idea of 'Sailor' as a name
I don't think I told you until just now,
but I've thought for years about the name 'Atlas'
How beautiful a sailor and her compass go together

Permission slip to dream
My signature next to yours
A map we drew together in the sand
Tiny, sparkling eyes looking back at us
Their song proof of our travels



A LESSON IN LOVING MYSELF

BY SALEM MCGHEE

When I walked into my Love and Sex lecture on April tenth, Sublime was playing. We were talking about Kant and his notions of gender-specific beliefs and let me tell you here – he's full of shit. On April tenth, ten minutes after walking out of my love and sex class, I got a call.

I think deep down I knew what the entirety of that week was leading to, but when I got broken up with, I honestly didn't feel anything. It wasn't like I emotionally checked out like I do whenever I get distraught or ecstatic, I didn't even feel absent from my body like I had been for the days before, dissociating in and out. I felt more present than ever, and when I walked into my dorm room and started ripping two years worth of pictures off the walls, I think my roommate thought I was having a psychotic breakdown.

For about a week after, I could tell everyone was waiting for me to break, for me to start crying and stay stuck. My mom came down on Tuesday to pick up the box of things from my dorm, the build-a-bear axolotl with her voice in it. If anything, I was relieved. Which is so weird to say given that she was my everything for so long, but after it all went down, I didn't feel anything other than free.

I saw her parents about a week after, her brother hugged me and said that he'd miss me, and it broke my heart. In the two weeks after my then-girlfriend had left for Paris, before the phone call, I felt like we were growing apart. I had felt farther from anyone in my life than maybe ever, even more than seventh grade. If there's one thing that a breakup

helps you realize – it's just how many people are in your corner. At the time it seems like I should feel the least love, I've never felt more.

That night I met up with my friend Stella. We were close before but not enough, but when I walked out and told her what happened, she seemed more distraught than me. She hugged me tight and grabbed my hand and we ran across the street to Unthank for ice cream. She let me tell her everything that happened, and when the lightning storm trapped us in the dining hall, we talked and laughed the whole time. We hang out just to see each other more now; we meet up to watch House of Dragon and journal together rather than just do homework between our classes.

The day after I hung out with another one of my friends, we were going to see *Project Hail Mary* and I told him about the events of my life. He didn't press, he was just there, and when we walked into the theatre and he started pointing out the musical motifs in the movie, I was so happy to have surrounded myself with people like him. We both cried during the movie, and as we walked out, I felt a kinship in how similar we were.

My friend Nox came down from Corvallis the week after. We got pasta and jokingly flirted with each other and talked about therapy and moving forward and played chess and made horrendous jokes. I walked him out to his car at nine and we stood in the road for half an hour talking nonsense because we didn't want to part before he drove off.

When I went to see my extended family, they didn't ask even though they knew. It felt so nice to just exist with them. To look through family photos and drink too much soda and hang out with my cousins who are ten years older than me and feel the closest I've had to having siblings as we played card games based on pure luck and Ryan managed to win every time.

In the box of things I had sent home before was a jellycat bear. When I went home my mom and I dyed her dark pink at midnight. I spilled the dye all over the counter, and we laughed and cleaned it up and now when I see that bear I just think about my mom and how much fun we had that day.

Ellie and I were watching *The Pitt* and when we reached the end of season one, we both cried. We hugged each other and covered each other's eyes when it got too gory. I crawled into bed that night and I felt so grateful that I had a friend like her – a roommate like her, that we could slot together and live together and be so close. I've never had siblings, but she makes me feel how fun it would be to have a sister. When we tease each other and we sass and I laugh as she falls backwards when a bug flies at her.

My other roommate Chloe convinced me to get Tomodachi Life – I downloaded it while she was showing us around. I got to work on making all of my friends, I like being able to feel like I can carry them with me in my pocket.

I'm sitting here writing this now, April twenty fourth, and listening to the new Noah Kahan album for the first time, and I feel like I'm flourishing. It feels like it should be my breakup album, sad woodsy girl music for the girl who had tickets to go with her past love to his concert. Instead, it's like a reminder of how far I've come in the past few weeks; the boost in confidence, the lack of insecurity, and the love I feel for the world and people around me. I don't want to waste my time where love isn't wanted, and if I'm not being loved in return, why would I stew in it instead of pulling myself back up? I have so much to give, and it feels so nice to just exist in my own time.

I even have the confidence to ask someone out, to have the courage to love again after everything.

Oregon Voice Poll

What's the most beautiful thing you've ever seen?

Wild horses running

Myself 🎆

fog at dusk that turns the sky all purple

When I cross the street and in the distance I see the orange and pink sky setting over the endless road.

my boyfriend <3

the sunrise over san francisco

bioluminescence

my grandmother!

my parents

the california super bloom

my girlfriend

What if Loving?

By Hope Call

New notions and visions of excitement gnaw at the edges of my mind, anticipatingly held like a cyanide pill between molars.

The yellow lace flowing down my torso is porous. Veiled yet sheer. My skin becomes this yellow lace, conceivably covering, yet see-through into the shape and slope of my musculature—into who I am.

You see between my tendons and reconcile with my vessels and veins. Take a stroll down an artery and give my blood permission to pump.

I feel you looking. I am perceived, yet I do not hunch to be made smaller, my back does not turn, my eyes do not flinch to a close, my hands do not sprint to cover my folds and marks. I remain straight-spined and steady-gazed. It's okay. It's okay because it is you.

You: Threading care into my core, a whipstitch between my ribs. I inhale shallowly and exhale slowly, not wanting to test the thin, frayed polyester fibers or crude double-knot gently tied at the end of the cage.

But I forget my fragility when I'm angry. I rip the seams in a rage. Running out of ribs, I toss another distortion of marrow into the pile of my failed Eves. Why could Adam create a better version of himself but I can't?

Soon, a steady breath and delicate whispered reassurance calms me. Fingertips classically trained by time and connection perform a muscle-memorized choreography. They trace gently down my spine and my tender ponderings return. I am reminded: What if loving?

What if the water glass on the nightstand is full at the end of the night? What if the thumb stroked along my hand holds humanity between its knuckles? What if the Mary Janes sit worn by the door, soles tired from trips to birthday parties and ice cream shops? What if stretching a slackline between two redwoods was all an afternoon needed? What if my decorated body—with intricately engraved silver adorning my fingers, collarbones, and wrists—had only your arms draped over it?

What if loving is breathing slowly, taking out the recycling, tying off the final knot, and letting the pile of failed recreations die?

I am a million things, but wish to forever be defined by a singular, seemingly limited yet ever-expansive state of being: What if loving is all I am?

I hope so.

The Season

By Ella Carr

It is September, and you tape a number to your chest. It's impossibly high. You look around the room full of people just like yourself, some older, some younger. All dressed in black, all with similar numbers. All similarly hopeful. Fear sits cold and tight deep in your stomach, and threatens to swallow you whole. You glance at the door and wonder if it's not too late to back out. To jump back into your red Toyota Camry and drive the hour home.

The coaches signal to your group. The audition has begun. You take your place in the group, as close to the front as you can get. So the coaches can see you better, and to boost your own confidence.

Someone hits play on the speaker, and the music begins. You let the choreography take over your body. All at once, you remember why you came.

It is October, and you recieve an email. The winterguard reviewed your audition. The winterguard thanks you for your time. The winterguard would like to offer you a spot. The winterguard requests that you read and sign the contract and confirm your acceptance, within five days, please? You throw your phone down on the bed, screen still on, and bang on your roommate's door. They recieve a bear hug and a squeal in thanks for answering their door. When they manage to coax the news out of you, bubbly and beaming, they hug you right back and take you out to dinner.

It is November, and you can't get to the gymnasium doors soon enough. The doors, impossibly heavy at the audition, are nothing against your newly gained confidence and muscles. Your teammates, equally giddy with the prospect of performance and competition, greet you like they've known you their whole life. Some complain at the long days, but the satisfaction and relief when your instructors call "Gather in" that signifies the end of rehearsal doesn't outweigh the joy every rep brings. Sometimes, during a water break or while listening to feedback or even in the middle of a rep (unideally) you are nearly knocked off your feet by a sudden I'm here, I'm really here, I'm spinning with this amazing team. I made it. It's nearly impossible not to smile like an idiot, drop everything, and hug yourself, dizzy with glee, when the feeling catches you. Your fingers press against the tape on your vwooden rifle, slick with sweat, to ground yourself in a reality that feels like fantasy. When you leave, when your aching feet finally carry you home and you collapse into your shower and onto your couch in a puddle of sore muscles, you are left with a tinge of disappointment. Each moment with your team is fleeting, even the moments consisting of your instructors ordering you to run the same four counts again and again until your brain turns to mush. You can feel time slipping through your fingers, watching the endlessly-long weekend rehearsals and inconsequential-

by-comparison work weeks flipping by on your calendar. Even this early into the season, when April and Championships seem impossibly far away, you look back on the first few weeks and realize with a horror how quickly time is flying by. Every time you exit the gymnasium, the knowledge that you have lost time you will never get back sits heavy in your belly.

It is December, and winterguard has taken over your life. School is over. No more essays. No more tests. Only winterguard. You get home from practice and flop yourself down on the couch, turning on the TV instead of grinding out assignments. You are free when your friends ask. Jackson drives you home from practice. He pulls into the Wendy's drive-thru, eyes twinkling as he asks if you want a Frosty. You'll never say no to a Frosty. Well, maybe sometime in July, during the off-season, you'll gently turn your friends down, citing your sugary coffee that morning and homemade cookies from your sister waiting at home. But today, muscles aching satisfactorily, you find no reason to say no. The conniving voices in your head that whisper about scales tilting, weight gained, and ill-fitting clothes are silent for a blissful six months. You order a large and clink your cup against Jackson's, easy grins adorning your face. Four months ago, you had no idea Jackson existed. Now he is a mainstay of your Close Friends Story and will be your friend for years to come.

It is January, and your soreness is a burden instead of an honor. The relationships grown strong by hours of proximity have soured, tempers quick to anger and tears easy to fall. You accidentally trip over Mady's backpack on your way to your equipment, and she snaps something about your messy ponytail. You swallow back the retort rising on your tongue just barely. Isaac's November speech about giving each other grace and how everyone is primed full of stress, like balloons ready to pop, rings in your ears. Frustration makes the retort go down heavy, like bile, without any real satisfaction from being the bigger person. Both of your shoulders rise with frustration. Neither of you have clean runs directly after. Nor do most of your teammates, for varying reasons. Exhaustion, anger, apathy, despair. Your doubles, so perfect early in the season, seem to fail you every time they leave your hands. Jackson tells you you haven't gotten worse, but the standard hasn't gotten better. After the fifteenth double tossed at twilight behind your house, you concede his point. Videos of yourself from August you proudly showed off at the time are suddenly full of tiny discrepancies. Competitions that seemed too far away to be real are now looming. With competitions comes pressure. Everyone is stretched thin enough to snap. You joke with your coaches like you have all season. A quip that they would have responed to in kind in November, or with a grin in December, now earns you a "Is your show clean enough for you to crack jokes?" You exchange anxious glances with your teammates and retreat to your corner of the floor. Mady takes pity on you and asks to go over the flag feature together. "I can't remember count five and," she says. She remembers count five and. You break it down with her anyway. After three complete reps, you

find your breathing has evened out. Mady squeezes your shoulder at the end of rehearsal, and all is forgotten. When you watch back your runs at home, feet against the wall to ease pressure off of them, you find with a pleased sort of satisfaction that you have improved. You lie back against the carpet and look towards next weekend's rehearsal not with dread, but with a satisfied determination to continue.

It is Februrary, and competition season has finally begun. The spoils of all of your endless hard work and labor, sleepless nights and bruised fingers, is on display for the entire circuit to see. Your show is a diamond in the rough just barely unearthed, visible but not extractable or clean yet. Sections of the show your instructors had previously deemed competition-ready are now subject to hours-long scrutiny. You perform, dance, and count until your head spins alongside your flag. Evaluations looms impossibly far away, until you wake up one morning and it's suddenly arrived. You are a flurry of anxiety and anticipation, combing your hair with gel until every last strand lies flat and shines. You triple-check to make sure you've packed all of your makeup products and uniform pieces. Rehearsal before the show passes both too quickly and at a snail's pace. You are jumpy, hands shaky on your flag. You are struck with the desire to fix every problem before showtime. All too soon, rehearsal is over. You load up the floor and your equipment, hurried not by the promise of rest, but now by an eagerness for what's to come. Something goes wrong. Something always goes wrong. The van gets a flat tire, Jackson's flag rips, the speaker dies. Your coaches freak out and your captains squeeze your hands and implore you to breathe. Your mom drives up an hour early to pump gas into the tire. Mady sources an extra silk from the bottom of the equipment box. Isaac plugs the speaker in until it's time to leave and rides with it on his lap. You run through show warm-ups with the same panicked excitement. You say hello to your friends from other winterguards. You brush up on your makeup. You take deep breaths through all of your stretches and basics. Finally, your coaches lead you to the gymnasium doors. They drop a heartfelt speech on you, wish you good luck, and send you in. The cheers that greet you make all of the hard work worth it. For four and a half minutes, every eye in the gym is trained on you. You give it your all for that time and it's worth everything.

It is March, and competitions are now a familiar beast. Full weekend rehearsals are a rare break, now interspersed with the excitement of competitions. Each individual anxiety-inducing step has now become a routine, broken down to a science. You apply your makeup while you discuss the merits of drum corps auditions with Mady. Somewhere in the middle of Santa Clara Vanguard and Carolina Crown, you glance up and realize your eyeshadow's perfect. What once took you two hours, four tries, and one and a half makeup wipes is now a thoughtless process. Your hands didn't even shake once. When you take the floor, butterflies nestle in your stomach like a well-paved road home, but they don't flutter as much as before. You take

a deep breath and trust yourself. You know exactly how much power to give each
move, where to squeeze your muscles and where to release them, and where to place your equipment and body in space to achieve the desired look. Your four and a half minutes of bliss are less panicked. You let yourself enjoy the moment.

As with every good protagonist's journey (or colorguard choreography), as you understand and improve at the process, the stakes and difficulty level rise. You've advanced to the next level. Every rehearsal, your coaches chant, Dayton, Dayton, Dayton. The World Championship Finals in Dayton, Ohio, are the culmination of your season. You and your teammates have traded whispers of it, hidden glances and grins "This move will look great at Dayton" "We have to nail this toss by Dayton" but you haven't let yourself dream. Not yet. When your instructor yells "If you dance like that we might as well skip Dayton entirely!" you shake your head and picture the three competitions before you board your flight. Their voices echo in the back of your head every time you spin. Every day that goes by is a day closer to Dayton. Pressure builds thick in your throat. It dissapates when you step onto the floor at competitions. For four and a half minutes,all that matters is now.

It is April, and everything you have ever wanted has come true. The moment you have been working towards, dreaming of, since you first set foot in the gymnasium seven months ago has come to fruition. All of your hard work, your blood, sweat and tears, has been realized.

Relief as well as grief settles over you as the final notes ring. Notes you could chant and count in her sleep, and you would likely hear behind your eyes as soon as your head hits the pillow tonight.

Chest heaving, smile aching, you lock your body into her final pose. The music's end is overshadowed by the roar of the crowd. Faceless strangers, made anonymous by the arena lights, rose to their feet. You grin harder.

Just as your coaches had taught you, you hold her pose for one, two, three, four, five counts. You let your body release like a puppet with its strings cut. Energy bleeds out of you, reminding you that you had just danced nonstop for the past four and a half minutes. Sweat burns on your face, threatening to make your flawless makeup run. Your muscles hurt. Your smile hurts. You
are on top of the world.

You strip her flag and turn to the nearest teammate You reach for each other at the same time. Mady's grip is tight, as expected of a dancer - she has the muscles to back it up. Mady buries her face in your shoulder, leaving a dampness that could have been tears or sweat. You don't particularly care to find out.

"We did it," Mady whispers, without letting go. Against the noise of the arena, it was probably more of a yell.

Jackson and Isaac crash into your hug, nearly sending you to the floor, but you don't mind. Your truimphant laughter is a cacaphony.

Footsteps around them break the moment, but a part of you never leaves.

-Ella Carr

A Thought or A Prayer

By Cori Markus

It is with hands shaky from caffeine that I
long to be dizzy and run free.

There is so much I need to release.
But every time I try, shots fire at the mes-
senger.
Turns out the messenger is me.

I want to dance in the water.
Floating, falling it doesn't matter there's
no eyes watching the inbetween.

Feeling trapped within the palms
of my own hands.
I'm holding onto too much, where do I reach?

The older I get, the less grown I feel.
My inner child is a pessimist, yet she sings
to the flowers and aches for the trees.

I remember a time when bandages
still had meaning,
a patch over pain for comfort and ease.

Now, my wounds are gaping and open
as I'm sat at home sipping my coffee,
I bleed
and bleed.

Respectrum

no respect
UTIs
spoon-feeding your adult partner in public
$169 diploma frame
coulrophobia from 2016 clown craze
playing guita on a date
misdiagnosing the dog
Frank Gallagher
dirty roommates that tells you to clean
giving the same life update to 30 different people

people who look like cartoon characters

evil HYPHY

mulled wine

Ohio

spending your tax refund on shit you don't need

respect

Bi-Mart

expensive bottles of water

Minecraft date

getting picked up from the airport

black sweatshirt

season 2 after 6 years

Respect

A Wave

I am born a child of the sea

The waves wash over my eyes

It is all abundantly clear

For 1 am made of water and stardust

Sand and shells

The sun and the clouds

Meant to travel and fly

I am like a wave

Beautiful and fleeting

Crashing and extreme

Dangerous and exciting

Yet I do not stand out

To be a human is to be a wave

It is all abundantly clear

– *Anonymous*

The man and his cloud

The splash of water across sodden sidewalks, Drums in the clouds that spread music,
A man next door yells to shut the window,
As the sky races him,
Her rolling hills of heaven sailing over us,
And she opens up to the world,
The drums boom and chime,
And the man shouts to hurry up,
A gale running through our alley,
The conductor from her high stand,
Urges the symphony onward.
And the man gripes, but doesn't shout,
As he keeps the window open.

Wistful

The shutters fly open,
Unclasped letting the breeze fly in,
Salt from the stones and water below,
Mixing with lilac and clove,
It's delicate notes moving through my room,
Fluttering through my heart and my hair,
A blessing in how it fills my room
As the butterflies are released at this sign of spring.

By Carina Bellendaine

Oregon Voice Poll

What brings you bliss?

film photos

empty canvas to-do list

the ocean

falling asleep with my bf with no alarm the next morning

the color blue

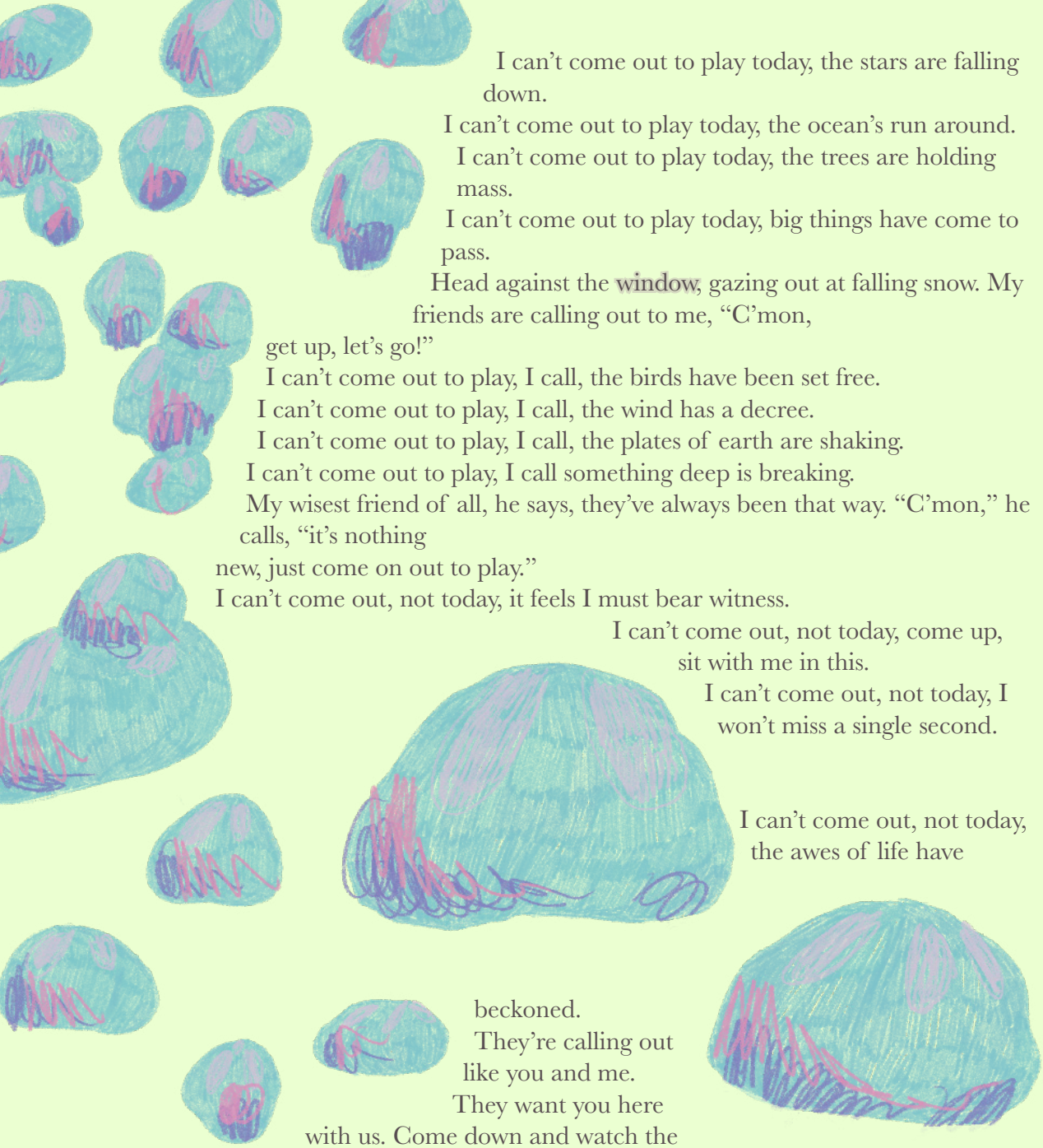
hammock time!

clouds

Slugs

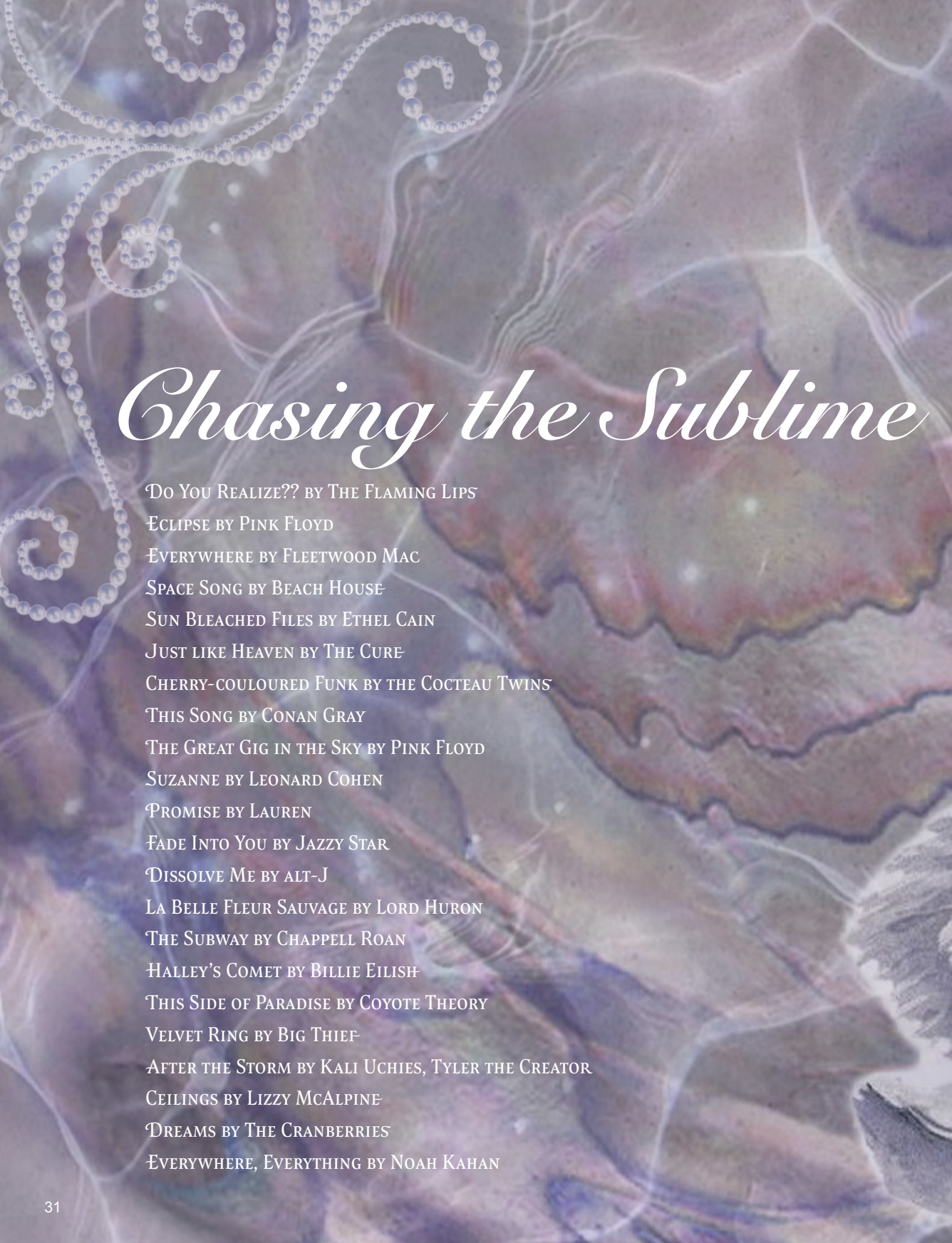
joint in the park

taking a bath



I can't come out to play today, the stars are falling down.
I can't come out to play today, the ocean's run around.
I can't come out to play today, the trees are holding mass.
I can't come out to play today, big things have come to pass.
Head against the window, gazing out at falling snow. My friends are calling out to me, "C'mon, get up, let's go!"
I can't come out to play, I call, the birds have been set free.
I can't come out to play, I call, the wind has a decree.
I can't come out to play, I call, the plates of earth are shaking.
I can't come out to play, I call something deep is breaking.
My wisest friend of all, he says, they've always been that way. "C'mon," he calls, "it's nothing new, just come on out to play."
I can't come out, not today, it feels I must bear witness.
I can't come out, not today, come up, sit with me in this.
I can't come out, not today, I won't miss a single second.
I can't come out, not today, the awes of life have beckoned.
They're calling out like you and me.
They want you here with us. Come down and watch the world unfurl, a witness bearer thus.
I must come out to play, you say, life happens on the ground.
I must come out to play, you say, here freedom can be found.
I must come out to play, you say, you're right now I can see.
I must come out to play, you say, no longer scared I'll be.
I'm coming out to play, hold on, I'm coming, wait for me!

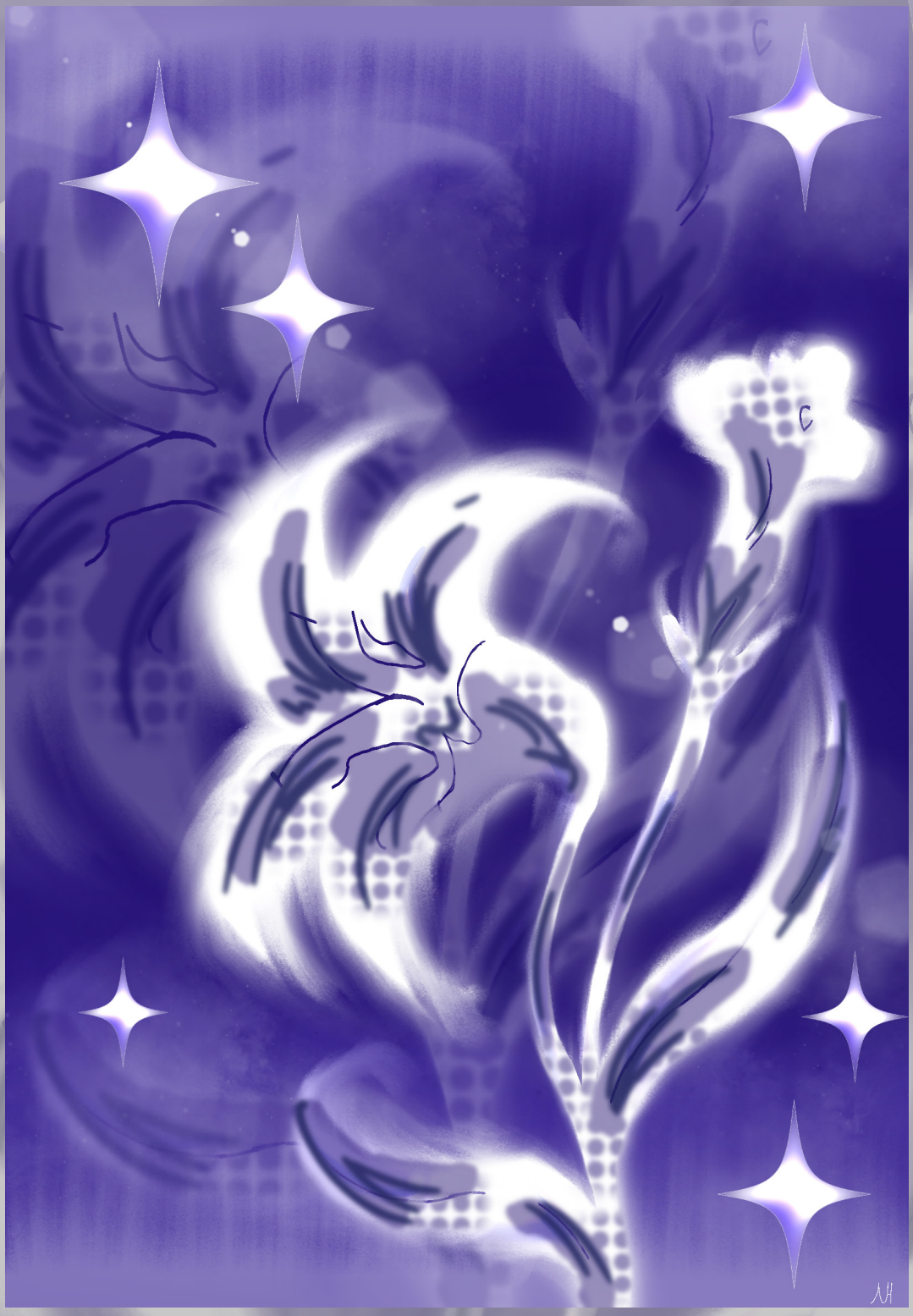
- Murdoch



Chasing the Sublime

Do You Realize?? by The Flaming Lips
Eclipse by Pink Floyd
Everywhere by Fleetwood Mac
Space Song by Beach House
Sun Bleached Files by Ethel Cain
Just like Heaven by The Cure
Cherry-couloured Funk by the Cocteau Twins
This Song by Conan Gray
The Great Gig in the Sky by Pink Floyd
Suzanne by Leonard Cohen
Promise by Lauren
Fade Into You by Jazzy Star
Dissolve Me by alt-J
La Belle Fleur Sauvage by Lord Huron
The Subway by Chappell Roan
Halley's Comet by Billie Eilish
This Side of Paradise by Coyote Theory
Velvet Ring by Big Thief
After the Storm by Kali Uchies, Tyler the Creator
Ceilings by Lizzy McAlpine
Dreams by The Cranberries
Everywhere, Everything by Noah Kahan

Listen to the Full Sublime Playlist



This Year's Fridays

By Elsa Rogers

it has been a week
five days, but far too long since
i felt your hips, traced your lips
"i missed you," i say, as if you couldn't tell

we go back upstairs
dinner, dishes, tv show
crossword, ice cream, did you know
that it is already eleven thirty

i go brush my teeth
wash my face, find my glasses
i hurry back to find you
waiting for me, wrapped in clouds of white linen

you fall asleep first
as i lay in the dark and
try to stop thinking too much
i listen to your breathing and close my eyes

i am of this earth
flawed, aching and world-weary
but you, love, are beyond it
part of the sky and all of heaven above

Oregon Voice Poll

What's waiting for you in the field?

the sun on
my face

a flower probably

the green one.

my childhood

serenity

a picnic with a
lovely lunch

my dogs

a nice cup
of tea

a casket

a whole costco
rotisserie chicken

my childhood
puppy

his smile

my mom

nostalgia

peace

Orchid Mantis

Daphne Patrick

A life spent on the defense.
An orchid mantis becomes something else entirely.
A leg morphs into pink petals,
and I dance across the stage again.

A life spent reinventing.
An orchid mantis survives by mimicry.
But I am out of step
and I'm tired of imagining the ends.

A life spent - planning to do it one way.
An orchid mantis thrives on surprise.
It ambushes you
a career-ending injury in the first act.

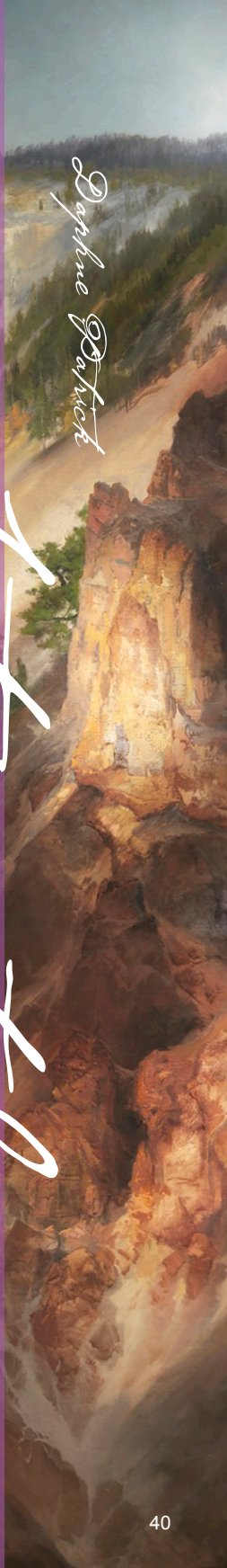
A life spent waiting,
an orchid mantis baits and lures with faux flora.
Kills before the prey knows they're caught
And I'm safe enough to cry about it.

A life spent in your arms.
an orchid mantis observes and lets herself be observed.
Certain eyes trained to see camouflage,
and I'll put my racing thoughts to bed.

A life spent re-learning.
An orchid mantis doesn't stay this way.
Though not overnight, her natural color is restored
and my world will stop spinning.

Enlightened

Daphne Patton



I have such grief that I will not be able to save the world.
But she tells me, floors creaking
I do not need to save the world
for it to save us.

So I won't.
I won't rush to high ground.
Even though I know
that's how you survive a tsunami.

It rushes in to soothe the rubble,
and there are things caught
in pockets and undertows
that won't be recovered.

But that's okay.
I will find new ways to remember them.
You tell me we can take our time
to mourn what was lost.

But morning has not come for me yet.
I'm still sifting, searching through
my moon-lit tears
trying to find scraps of the world I loved.

In my grief of saving,
I will learn to transform.
Ashes make good compost
and energy has never died.

Giving up on the future is impossible,
Because the future doesn't exist yet.
Just like in the wild,
we aren't in it, we are it.

HONK IF YOU LOVE
THE sublime VIBE
OF YOUR grandma's kitchen
everything is
romantic
sorry for my driving!
im singing
Fade Into You
By Mazzy Star
ON MY WAY TO
RECREATE
the perks of being a wallflower
TUNNEL SCENE

"You can't take your own mythology too seriously."

Ode To the Moon

Four and a half billion years ago
my lover came to be.
The trauma of our soil
memorialized
in the sky,
debris given purpose
by the ocean's tides,
by the darkness of night.

We waltz through the vacuum,
synchronous rotation
locking your face
upon us.
Only we are so blessed
by your glowing smile,
your craterous dimples
dotting
your silver surface
with caldera constellations.

As you transform
into a black orb
for the crew of the Artemis II,
my wonder-filled eyes
look to you with longing
and I can't help but think
how lucky we are
that our sun is four hundred times
larger than you
and four hundred times
farther from you
than you are from me.

There are more than eight hundred
and ninety-one moons
in our solar system.
Call it fate,
call it circumstance,
that you chose us.

By Cullen Akers

How to look *Sublime*

@hoesforclothes

@pixie.
dream.shop

@shed_maid

@bugknit

@thesteampunkghost

@eyesuphere_studio

@workfrom
beachbelike

AROUND
THE
WORLD
0045572
0045572
CABARET
The Percussion
SUN

Ode to the Sublime (Cell Animation)

By Annie Mae Wig

Oh like the rays of a neon genesis sun,
The cells of animation make up my very being.
Touching a glowing 2D horizon
Keying me into what I'm seeing.

The beauty plays in frames before me,
Insight on worlds I wouldn't have known before.
So tactile in its vivid imagination,
Of realms for which dreams exist to explore.

But what's it all about,
To reflect on beauty.
Is it so bad to want to gaze upon it?
To want to become part of it?
Let us look upon art that is exalted
And yearn to become one with what is sublime.

My chest is full of stars, twinkling bright, ready to burst

I want nothing
I want everything
I'd do anything just to hold your hand

In my dreams, my arms curl around you
A being of stardust and sapphires

I imagine your touch

Hot in the night

Electricity on my skin

Sweet nothings dripping off your tongue

My limbs crumple in on themselves
My bones ache
My heart beats your name

Every night I wait underneath the streetlight
For you

I pray to the moon that you will appear
Dark shadows clearing
Gold light washing across your face

And so I wait
In the meadow of dreams

until you reach for my hand

and call out my name

Dana Josephson

P F I Y M B T S N M S F A U G I G G L D X Z P B B
R P O Z P E N U E S P M I L G S I A U N B X E B L
I T D J P D E N G U Z L Y Q X F R E T T I L G R O
E S S N M V C B E K I Y A O G D F J A H J L O E S
B E D G E W S E C L G T V T E N U D B V C K Y L S
C R M Y O Y E A J L B V T H C N N O F C S K O J O
V O E S F J D M O C S B T N K A N W O B N I A R M
S F H A P S I L C H P A U N W S R T K X T O S N X
U E C A T U R I B L C C O B F Z T F M N N S W T Q
W N S K E H I A I D I W R V I S T A E H Z V V G Q
D C H F T G T T C L N M G I P M R D L Z E E M M S
H Y Q G S M D A E O A Z E Y C B N G B J F I X W W
B D I T Q U V D K V S C F I A E Y O I K E H C G S
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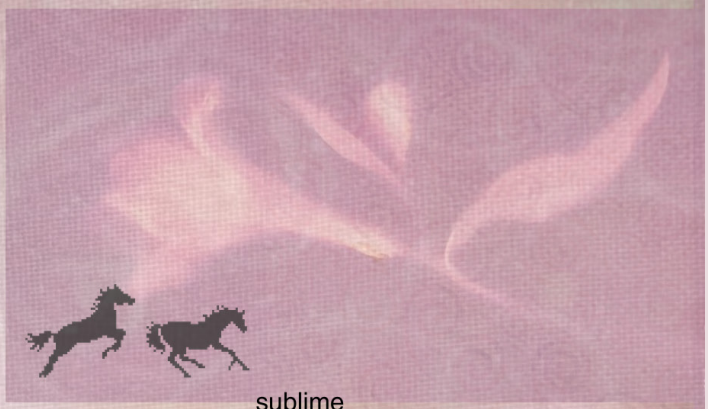
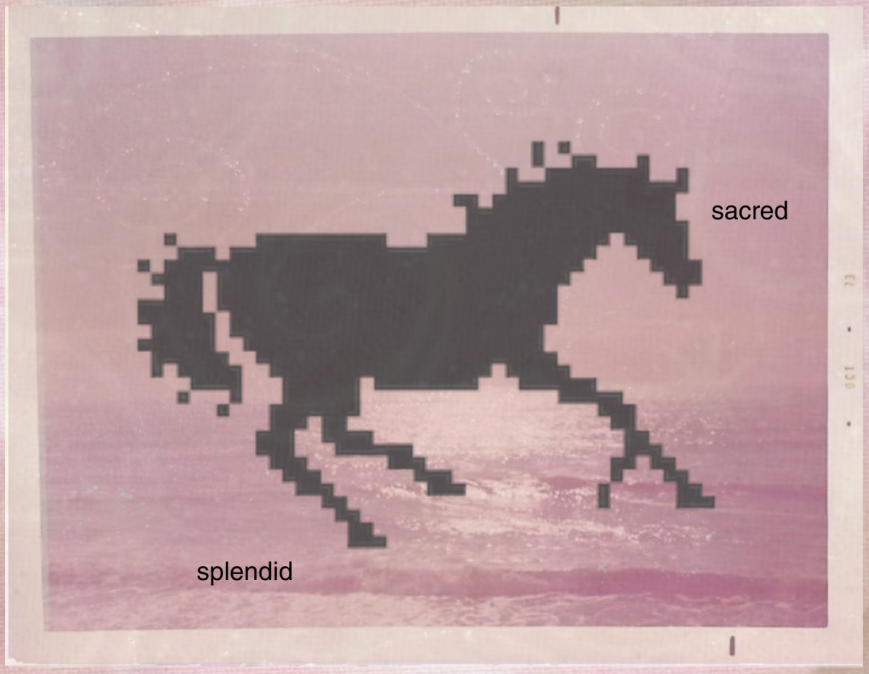
S N Y L D H S R I L N D I S T J Q S N E B Q Q P V
Z K P W C N A T U R E G N C R U O G E R P F H Z N
Z T S Y I L N U N B R A V Q A F F O H U S M D H L
Z G S W O U L B M Z R E L W A H H J E H G Z K L X
W P T V Q U X Y C T H Z D J B H X B R F O E M M S
Q Z E B F D P H T T Y G Y N C U L K P H Q U J M X
R R Z C I U A J Q L F W Z A O N F W M F J A A M N
C P M X K U S R L B R C M V Q W X B O B G E L S K
A R Q K R B U O K U Y J X N B S F C C C J F U D L
Z K E K W M C R F U G T D Q C P T F N E R S Q B Z
O X S R K B O L M S I A N K J R F R I E Z K C I W

BLOSSOM
BREATHTAKING
BUBBLE
CATHEDRAL
COSMIC
FOREST
FRACTAL
GLIMPSE
GLITTER
INCOMPREHENSIBLE
IRIDESCENT
LOVER
NATURE
PSYCHEDELIC
RAINBOW
SUNBEAM
TRANSCENDENT
UNKNOWN
VISTA
WONDER

do you feel



sublime



sacred

splendid

transcendent

holy fucking shit

Written by Stella Kim

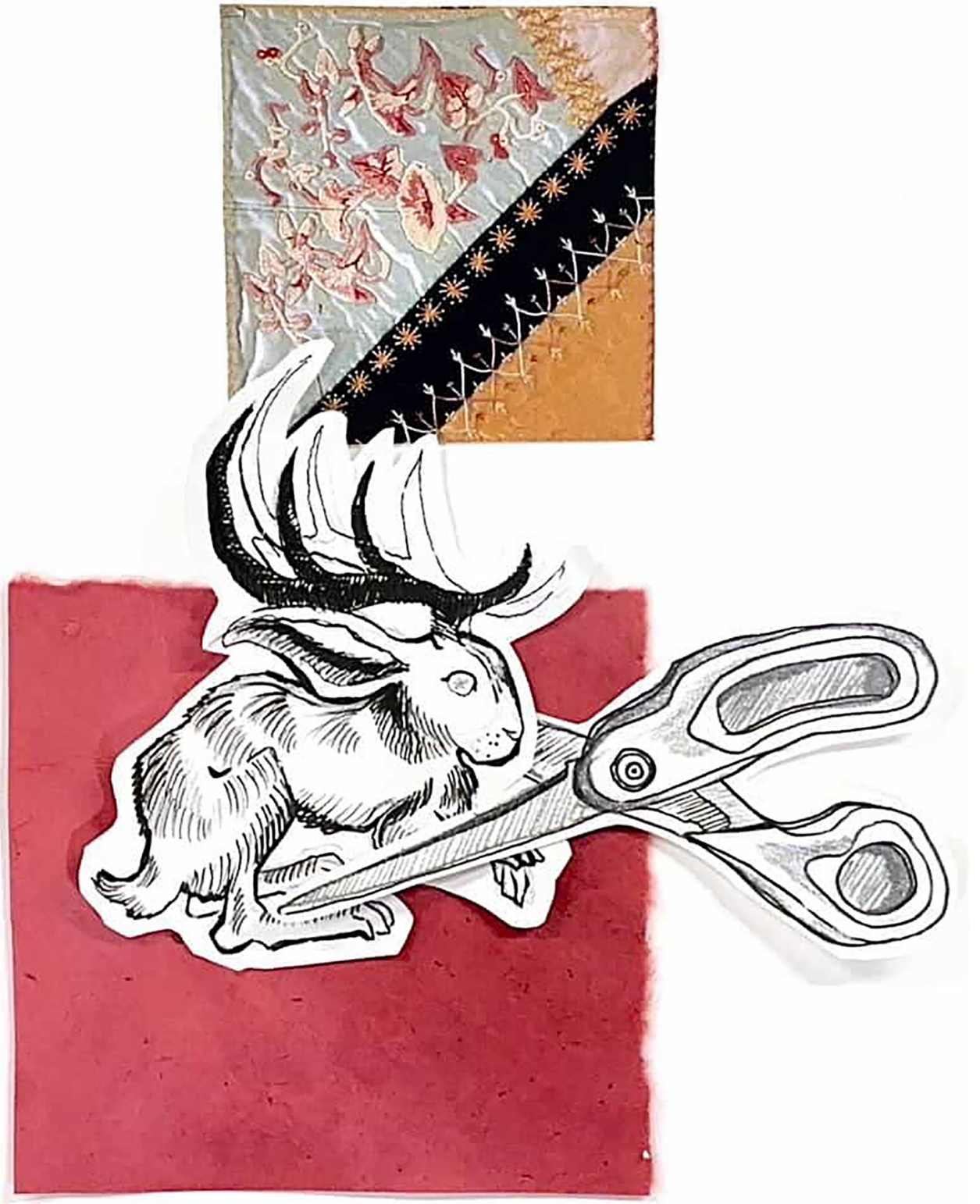
When I imagine the desert, the heat haze is like a curtain to heaven.

I like it when the heat wiggles its way off the asphalt. I like counting those weird puddles on the road,
when my dad was driving us home in Arizona. I liked pretending
that the mirage could stay, and we could get as close as we wanted to.
I don't know if I liked Arizona itself.

I remember when I saw a woman fall across a granite outcrop. The bedrock stuck out of the ground, and her dog had seen our dog, lugging her over the stone. I thought it was a perfect injury. The way the stone stuck out, just enough to dig against her side. Like a mermaid against the break.

I remember closing the shutters, trying to keep the light out. folding them upwards, so the sun couldn't creep between the slots. Everything was white outside. The light reflected off the quartz in the yard
and hurt.
When I feel a pang in my head, I go back to bed. I'll lay there until it's too warm to stay.

I do miss the pit in my stomach
when it was almost noon, and I was 11 years
old, and
I hadn't left my bed, and the mourning dove
wouldn't shut up.
I could turn that feeling over until it was
polished.
like a burl, or a granuloma, or a pearl,
or some other emerging symptom.



The Angels

By Cullen Akers

Grandma used to say thunder
was the angels going bowling
I never quite believed in God
but I liked how she would tell it
akin to Olympus
everything that was
could be attributed to the angels
and their pastimes
I hadn't seen them play since that summer in Texas
my face pressed against glass
mesmerized by the dense wall of rain,
the colossal grey clouds towering over
the plains,
the jagged fingers of lightning striking the earth,
in an awe-struck stupor
reveling in the sheer magnitude of the game
On this sweet morning I reminisce
they're bowling again

The Angels II

I don't frighten easily
but certain things get me.
Spiders, poltergeists,
the vast expanse of space.
Thunder first thing in the morning,
the sunless sky barely awake,
clouds tempestuous sludge.
All the world a stage
for this show of lights
and booming drama.
But a game wasn't so scary.
The cracks of ten-pound torpedoes
slamming waxed hardwood,
toppling pins like trampled kings.
It was accompanied by playful laughter,
rhapsodic cheers.
It came with loving family,
caring friends.
It was safe,
and so I was.
And when swirling folds
of impenetrable condensed vapor
swallow the sun
and light up in bursts,
when the earth shakes
the cracks coming faster than I could register
the flash
and start counting seconds
but my unease is met with gentle arms
and when their game concludes
they take long drags from slender cigarettes
hanging from splintering fingers of bark
the smoke curling in tendrils through the
valley
I exhale deeply and watch my breath mingle
with the fog
in meditative bliss
passing kissed paper to another's hand
their next game is on the horizon
and my loves have retreated indoors
but I linger
extending an energetic prayer to God
while His angels
fling electric cannonballs
across the sky

with the magnitude
of divine blasts from above,
I imagine heavenly hands
gripping ten-ton torpedoes,
swinging them back
with unimaginable grace,
and sending them to topple
pins like towers
above this place where I stand,
watching the sky with awe
as the rain pours down
and drenches me.
The water feels like peace,
washing me clean of sin,
and my heart is light,
accompanied by friends
that see the poetry in this moment.
And so even as the game rages on
less than a mile
from where we are frozen,
exposed,
I must be safe.
I am free,
I am loved,
and so I am.

what is the most *enchanting* place you've ever been to?

the yellow bridge in merlin at night. Great for stargazing
Sequoia National Park
airbnb called Mushroom Haven
portland japanese garden
sabra cruz beach at midnight
my grandmas house
Paris
san francisco
lake valhalla
an art exhibit by katharine cellinni moore
Yachats in December
Scottish coast on a 5am train to Edinburgh
blue pools in oregon

CAMP

Dear Maxine

By Carina Bellendaine

The park,
That day,
Our day.
Two strangers and yet,
childhood nostalgia pulled at us,
Those years,
Our years,
Of braided hair and trying on our brothers clothes,
They fit us so poorly, baggy and long
(Our eyes and legs the same)
Trying on something we weren't, yet.
You fit so well,
My life in your life,
And months stretched,
That grew with us,
Summers extending and cool cups in hand.
But the ties snapped,
And it fell out,
Yours,
And mine.
And that plane took you to Jersey,
My number changed, and highschool hurt,
The empty chairs where you would be,
But we're grown, and these clothes hug me now.
So I'm wondering if you see this,
Come find me,
I'll be at the park,
Same time as you left,
On that day, our day.

Have you ever heard the warning—many children my age did—a seed gone down the gullet
made you one unlucky kid.

My brother Ed, he told me, but he told me more than that. He said the seed would suck me dry like fleas had drained the cat.

They'd take my tummy from me, twisting up my flesh and bone. Those spiteful little buggers, he said, you'll never be alone!

But solitude was scary. Never something I wished for. I'd rather be part plant, I thought, than me forevermore.

I started gulping apple seeds; watermelon; pine. Picked poppies off of muffin tops, from
cherries, clementines.

I dreamt of sharing secrets, breathing carbon just like air. Vines snaking through my arteries, growing leaves instead of hair!

Fingertips of flowers, I'd stop fuzzy flying bees. My hope beyond all hope, I'd say, to join the world of trees.

My seed and me, two pals we'd be, a life bound two in one. Running, rooted, either way, a bond never undone.

And if I'm being honest, as honest as a tree, I do still hope to one day grow; so still, I swallow seeds.

-Murdoch

BA

ON THE MIRACULOUS DIVINITY OF LOVE

By Helen Yancey

We were carrying out our Sunday ritual, an afternoon hike with a break for lunch and marveling at nature. That day, we found ourselves on a path that led down to a shallow pool fed by a timid waterfall. It trickled down from a rocky edge overhead; trees extended over the blunt cliff, and as the sun shone through the greenery, everything around us became dappled with contrasting patches of shadow and light, including our skin. By this time, we were hungry, our bodies heavy from the trekking and the unforgiving heat of late May, so we decided to stop and rest. As I reveled in a spot of shade, she stripped to her underwear and made for the water, eager to cool herself and rinse away the sweat that had collected on her forehead, her neck, between her shoulder blades. While she bathed, I reached for one of the sandwiches I'd packed for us. Between bites, I admired the effect early evening had on our surroundings. A thin haze was settling in the air, softening the world and lending to it a mystique that held me captive, entranced. What finally pulled me out of the spell was her cry. I hadn't heard her voice in pain before, and the sound scared me. Eyes clearing, in front of me I saw a scene like something from a tapestry. My lover on her knees, hands plunged into the water as gravity continued to pull more from above, and with her back to me I could see what should not have been possible: towards the top of her spine on either side, thin lines of blood trickled down from where ivory feathers were poking out of her flesh.

I have little memory of what happened the rest of that day. I drove us home. We didn't go to the hospital or Urgent Care or an ornithologist, because what could they have done? She was growing wings! Two weeks later, we still don't think they're done coming in. Using saved sick leave, she's stayed home and I've been taking care of her. For all our initial shock, what's proved most pressing is her pain. It takes time for new bone, muscle, and skin to push through connective tissue, slowly opening vertical tears in her back and stretching the flesh beyond its limits. The gashes will eventually heal into pink scars, but for now they're trying to scab over, causing an infernal itch she can't reach. But that's what I'm for. I've found that cold, damp washcloths soothe the burning, and that, after drying the area, a thick coat of lotion and Vaseline

softens the skin and keeps her from bleeding. Shirts aren't an option, so I make sure her favorite sweatpants are always clean, and when she's cold, I wrap her in blankets and warm towels from the dryer. When this process is finished, we'll find a tailor who can accommodate odd requests for clothing alterations. She gets frustrated by the bulky, unfamiliar appendages. Always bumping into things and getting in the way, they change the way she occupies space, a change she's not yet used to. I help her in the bath, carefully washing the places she can't get to. I cook her favorite meals, and in the evening, we sit together, her head in my lap, my hand running through her hair, a movie or music playing in the background, though we never hear or see any of it. Even when her smile turns into a wince as she shifts on the couch, she reaches for me, hand clasping the back of my neck and pulling me down to her mouth. With every kiss, I can only think about how lucky I am that I get to learn to hold her in new ways, this miraculous

transformation yet another reason to keep her close, closer. When we break apart, I see something in her eyes, and it's not just the love she has for me. It confirms a thought I've had before, and the words ring in my mind over and over: "She must be an angel, she must be an angel, she must be, she must be."
I don't know what life will look like once she's completely healed, and neither does she. The world might not take kindly to a woman with wings, someone so beautiful and divine walking down the street, her fingers laced with mine. Simply existing could become more dangerous for her, a fear that seizes me with such force I'm made dizzy by it. I have to look down, deeply breathing in and out, but when I look up and she's looking back at me with a poised, knowing intensity, the smallest grin on her lips like a challenge to all that may be, I'm grounded again. Now, I can only think about July. We have a trip to the coast planned, a week in a house by the water in a beach town with enough ice cream shops and bookstores to keep us happy. I can see us there already. On the beach, I'll be stretched out on a towel with my books and writing scattered around me. She'll be hunting for seashells and stained-glass spheres hidden in the sand, occasionally making her way to where the tide rolls in, walking into the waves until they're up to her waist. And when she comes back to join me, a collection of shells in her hands, she'll stand above me, and for a moment, sunglasses won't be necessary. With her before me, angel wings framing her figure, suddenly there is no such thing as the sun - only her, her radiant outline.

Letter from the Editor

Imagine, for a moment that you are standing on a cliff by the ocean. In front of you, an endless expanse of blue and clouds. Below you, jagged rocks. World-weary trees cling to the bluff. Look out ahead of you and take it all in. The feeling you might be feeling is awe at the sublime. The knowledge that what you're looking at is something you can never hope to understand, although it's human instinct to try. The best you can do is enjoy it with the time you have.

You are reading this letter at the end of the magazine because I believe that the sublime is as undefineable as it is subjective. My sublime may not be yours–the eyes of my lover are the most beautiful thing I've ever seen, but to you they may just be green.

This issue of Oregon Voice is dedicated to all things awesome, incomprehensible, grandiose and breathtaking. The big stuff. Love, sex, life and death. It's also about the little things that make you feel the same way. Summer thunderstorms. A fantastical dream that you let yourself enjoy even though you knew was too good to be real. The rainbow on your bedroom wall. These small moments of bliss remind us it's a gift to experience this wonderful world.

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about how sublime the unknown is. I've found myself face-to-face with the nebulous future, and I have no idea what to make of it. I guess I'm afraid. I want so badly to know what comes next, but that's impossible. I want to make sense of it, but I can't. All I can do is watch it grow closer and tell myself it is good to feel this way. It's *human*. Awe at the sublime is human. It's okay to be a bit afraid too. After all, who isn't a little nervous on the edge of a cliff?

I'm out of time. The future is now. And so my parting words to you, dear reader, are these: go forth into this world knowing you know nothing, and be in awe of everything beautiful.

P.S.-It has been my sincere honor and pleasure to serve as editor-in-chief of *Oregon Voice* this year. This magazine will always have a special place in my heart. Thank you to everyone who trusted us with their work. *Oregon Voice* would not be what it is without the brilliant artists who fill its pages with their passion and creativity. Thank you also to our wonderful readers. And finally, thank you to the members of the absolutely incredible 2025-26 editorial team-Stella, Stella, Cassia, Eve, May, and Isabella. Y'all are the best.

oregon voice magazine